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A-1
COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND BUILDING
STAFF REPORT

Planning Commission

MEETING DATE October 13, 2005	CONTACT/PHONE Andrea Miller, 781-4171	APPLICANT Peter Harrison	FILE NO. AGP2004-00014
SUBJECT Proposal by Peter Harrison to establish an agricultural preserve to enable the applicant to enter into a land conservation contract. The project site is approximately 106 acres within the Agricultural land use category and is located at 8490 Carrisa Highway one mile from the intersection of Bitterwater Road and Highway 58, approximately 4.5 miles west of the community of California Valley. This site is in the Shandon-Carrizo planning area.			
RECOMMENDED ACTION Recommend approval of this request to establish an agricultural preserve to the Board of Supervisors as follows: Preserve Designation: Carrizo Plain Agricultural Preserve No. 24 Minimum Parcel Size : 160 Acres Minimum Term of Contract: 20 Years			
ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION Categorical Exemption (Class 17) ED04-551			
LAND USE CATEGORY Agriculture	COMBINING DESIGNATION Flood Hazard	ASSESSOR PARCEL NUMBER 072-301-002 and 072-301-017	SUPERVISOR DISTRICT(S) 5
PLANNING AREA STANDARDS: None Applicable		LAND USE ORDINANCE STANDARDS: Section 22.22.040C(2) – Minimum parcel size for new agricultural preserves	
EXISTING USES: Dry farm land, Home, Workshop and Barn			
SURROUNDING LAND USE CATEGORIES AND USES: <i>North:</i> Agriculture/Vacant <i>East:</i> Agriculture/Single Family Residence <i>South:</i> Agriculture/ Single Family Residence <i>West:</i> Agriculture/ Single Family Residence			
OTHER AGENCY / ADVISORY GROUP INVOLVEMENT: The project was referred to: Ag Commissioner			
TOPOGRAPHY: Relatively flat, 0% to 2% slope		VEGETATION: Mostly open grassland	
PROPOSED SERVICES: None required		ACCEPTANCE DATE: June 1, 2005	
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION MAY BE OBTAINED BY CONTACTING THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & BUILDING AT: COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER - SAN LUIS OBISPO, CALIFORNIA 93408 (805) 781-5600 FAX: (805) 781-1242			

PROJECT REVIEW

Site and Area Characteristics

Although farming is prevalent in the area, the closest agricultural preserve is approximately a mile from the project site. The parcel will be used for dry farming and grazing.

The following table shows the Natural Resources Conservation Service soils rating of the site (the whole site is the same soil type):

Land Capability Class		Irrigated Crop Suitability	Rangeland Suitability	Dry Farm Suitability	Acres
If Irrigated	If Non-Irrigated				
II	IV	-	Well-Suited	Well-Suited	106

Exhibit A shows the location, topography, and land use designations of the site and adjacent properties.

Compliance with the Agricultural Preserve Rules of Procedure

The property meets the current eligibility requirements for an agricultural rangeland preserve since it has more than 100 acres of land described in the soils report as well-suited as rangeland. The land is used for dry farm and is well-suited for this use based on the soil classification.

The appropriate minimum parcel size is 160 acres. The appropriate minimum term of contract is 20 years.

Agricultural Preserve Review Committee

The Review Committee meeting was held from 1:30 to 4:00 p.m. on June 27, 2005, at the U.C. Cooperative Extension auditorium in San Luis Obispo. The agenda included three requests to establish new agricultural preserves to enable applicants to enter into land conservation contracts, two requests to amend the boundaries of existing agricultural preserves (and contracts) to add land; two requests to rescind a contract and simultaneously enter into two new contracts to reflect the division of the property into two parcels, and a discussion of airstrips on contracted land.

Voting members of the Review Committee present were Don Warden (Agricultural Liaison Committee), Irv McMillan (Environmental Organization Member), Wayne Jensen (Farm Advisor), Hugh Pitts (Farm Bureau), Ed Carson (Land Conservancy of San Luis Obispo County) arrived for item 8, Robert M. Sparling (Public-at-Large Member), Lynda Auchinachie (County Agricultural Commissioner's Office), County Assessor (Sara Sylwester), and Warren Hoag (County Planning and Building Department).

Absent from the meeting were representatives of the Farm Service Agency, Cattlemen's Association, Soil Science Member. The meeting was chaired by Warren Hoag. Staff reports were presented to the committee by Terry Wahler and Andrea Miller of the Planning and Building Department.

The applicant, Peter Harrison, was not present for this item. Staff described the applicant's request and summarized the staff report including the current agricultural use and the suitability of the soils for the intended agricultural use.

APRC members and staff discussed the flood hazard designation shown on the land use category map through part of the property. It was noted that the property typically does not appear to have flooding problems and is not near a major watercourse. Ed Carson indicated that the property has irrigation potential. APRC members discuss creation of parcels in the area. Staff clarifies the subdivision history of the area for the Review Committee.

Irv Mc Millan expressed concern about allowing parcels to be smaller than the minimum parcel size requirement for conveyance or subdivision. Warren Hoag responded by giving some history of the issue and explained that the minimum required acreage for eligibility is 100 acres "well suited as rangeland".

Following the discussion, Ed Carson moved that the committee recommend approval of the request as recommended by staff. This motion was seconded by Don Warden. The Review Committee voted in favor of the recommendation 8 to 1, with Irv Mc Millan dissenting due to the disparity between the minimum parcel size for conveyance and the actual size of the property.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommend approval of this request to establish an agricultural preserve to the Board of Supervisors as follows:

Preserve Designation:	Carrizo Plain Agricultural Preserve No. 24
Minimum Parcel Size:	160 Acres
Minimum Term of Contract:	20 Years

FINDINGS

- A. The proposed establishment of this agricultural preserve is consistent with the San Luis Obispo County General Plan, including the Land Use Element and the Agricultural and Open Space Element, and the county's Rules of Procedure to Implement the California Land Conservation Act of 1965.
- B. The proposed establishment of this agricultural preserve is appropriate and consistent with the character of the surrounding area.

Report prepared by Andrea Miller and Terry Wahler
and reviewed by Warren Hoag, Division Manager
Agricultural Preserve Program

A-4

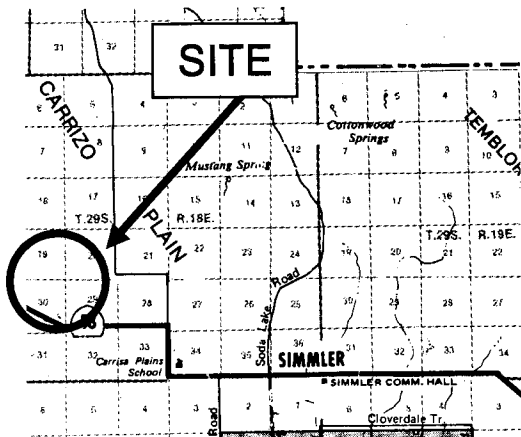
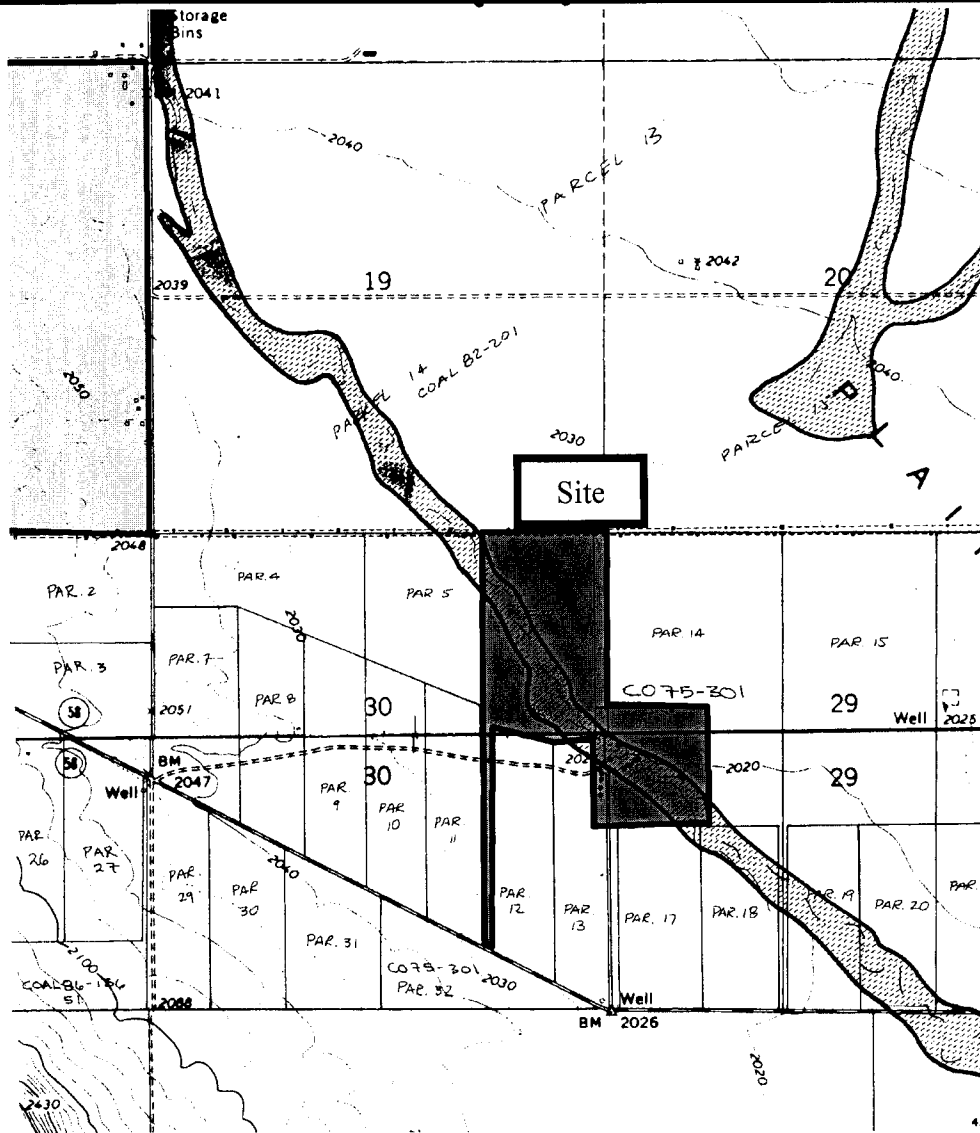


EXHIBIT A: Carrizo Plain Agricultural Preserve No. 24



Parcel Included: APN 072-201-002 and 017



Surrounding Land in Preserve and Contract

EXHIBIT A

Establishing an Agricultural Preserve

File No. AGP2004-00014 – Harrison

Minimum Parcel Size: 160 acres

Minimum Term of Each Contract: 20 Years

Resolution No.

Date: